

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. Claims 1-40 are pending in the application. No claims have been allowed. Claims 1, 21, 22, 27, 33, 36, 37, 38 and 40 are independent. Claims 1, 21, 27, 30, 32 and 33 have been amended. Claim 41 has been added. One paragraph of the specification, and the abstract, has been replaced. The amendments herein do not necessarily narrow the claims' scope.

Interview

Applicants thank the Examiner for the interview on November 4, 2004. Applicants believe the interview was helpful and now present claims for further consideration. In addition, Applicants are enclosing copies of the six IDS references listed below as requested by the Examiner.

Objection to the Abstract

Applicants acknowledge the objection to the Abstract and have amended the Application to address the objection.

IDS References Not Considered

Applicants submitted a number of IDS references in accordance with 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. However, while the majority of the IDS references were considered, six of the IDS references apparently were not considered (they were not initialed by the Examiner). The following is a list of the six IDS references that were apparently not considered:

IDS Dated	Reference
8/9/2001	Hollingsworth, "Workflow Management Coalition: The Workflow Reference Model," The Workflow Management Coalition Specification, pp. 1-55, January 19, 1995.
11/8/2002	"Achieving ETL Scalability in an e-Business World," <i>Hurwitz Report</i> , pp. 1-8, January 2001.
11/8/2002	"MicroStrategy Intelligence Server Features: Platform Architecture," http://www.microstrategy.com/oldstore/software/iserver/architecture.asp , pp. 1-2, June 27, 2001.

11/8/2002	Costanza, "Cognos Joins the Enterprise," <i>ENT</i> , Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 38, February 9, 2000.
11/8/2002	Johnson, "Start-up Puts Data Warehouse in a Box; DecisionPoint offers applications as a one-size-fits-all solution," <i>Computerworld</i> , p. 86, June 19, 2000.
11/8/2002	Muench, <i>Building Oracle XML Applications</i> , O'Reilly & Associates, Inc., pp. 1-792, September 2000.

During the interview, the Examiner indicated that the references were not in the file. Applicants submit herewith Exhibits A and B, postcards indicating that the references were received. For convenience of the Examiner, Applicants enclose another copy of the references and a 1449 form listing them.

Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner initial the appropriate boxes to indicate consideration of the six above-referenced IDS references that were submitted in accordance with procedure specified by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. *See also* MPEP § 609 ("An information disclosure statement filed in accordance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97 and 37 CFR 1.98 will be considered by the examiner assigned to the application.").

Cited Art

The Action cites U.S. Patent No. 6,278,977 to Agrawal et al. ("Agrawal"), U.S. Patent No. 6,349,290 to Horowitz et al. ("Horowitz") and U.S. Patent No. 6,108,004 to Medl ("Medl").

103 Rejection

Patentability of Claims 1-20, 27-32, 33-35, 36 and 38-39 under § 103(a)

The Action rejected claims 1-20, 27-32, 33-35, 36 and 38-39 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Agrawal in view of Horowitz. Applicants respectfully submit the claims in their present form are allowable over the cited art.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, three basic criteria must be met. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim

limitations. (MPEP § 2142.) Motivations to combine or modify references must come from the references themselves or be within the body of knowledge in the art. (See MPEP § 2143.01.)

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the executable sequence “comprises: at least one discrete executable directive defining a query against the collection of data, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable analysis directive, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable distribution directive.” Amended claim 1 reads as follows (emphasis added):

A computer-implemented method for presenting a user interface for construction of an executable sequence to automate a decision-making process based on a collection of data, the method comprising:

displaying representations of a plurality of discrete executable directives encapsulating logic associated with the decision-making process, wherein at least one of the discrete executable directives defines a query against the collection of data, at least one of the discrete executable directives defines an analysis directive to analyze information derived from the query, and at least one of the discrete executable directives defines a distribution directive to distribute information based on analysis performed by the analysis directive; and

accepting user input to assemble a set of the discrete executable directives into an executable sequence, wherein the executable sequence comprises:

at least one discrete executable directive defining a query against the collection of data,

followed at some time by at least one discrete executable analysis directive,

followed at some time by at least one discrete executable distribution directive.

Agrawal’s description of a graphical user interface does not teach or suggest “accepting user input to assemble a set of the discrete executable directives into an executable sequence, wherein the executable sequence comprises: at least one discrete executable directive defining a query against the collection of data, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable analysis directive, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable distribution directive” recited by claim 1. For example, the Application at page 75, lines 1-6 and FIG. 16A describes a user interface as follows:

For example, in the user interface scenario shown in FIG. 16A, query directives can be dragged onto the canvas and configured to generate the proper information. An analysis directive can analyze the results for a shortage

condition. A condition branch is added for processing when a shortage is recognized. A distribution directive can notify the affected manager and gain approval to create a purchase order.

The Application describes an exemplary executable sequence at page 11, lines 14-19 and Fig. 3 as follows:

A query cycle 332 engages in one or more queries to produce information derived from the data collection 312. Then, an analysis cycle 342 subjects the information from the query cycle to one or more analyses. Then, the distribution cycle 352 distributes information from the analysis cycle to one or more destinations. The distribution cycle 352 typically also includes processing related to formatting the information so it is of proper format when it reaches its destination.

In addition, the Application describes an exemplary executable sequence at page 13, lines 5-13 and Fig. 5 as follows:

An exemplary arrangement 502 showing sequences is shown in FIG. 5. In the example, an environment stores a set of executable query directives 512, a set of executable analysis directives 522, and a set of executable distribution directives 532. The executable processing directives shown can be associated together into a sequence 542. In such an arrangement, when the sequence is executed, the query directive 512A is processed. The results of the query 512A are then provided to the analysis directive 522A, and the results of the analysis directive 522A are then provided to the analysis directive 522B. Finally, the results of the analysis directive 522B are provided to the distribution directive 532B.

Agrawal describes a “graphical user interface for collecting process information and drawing representations of process models.” Agrawal col. 11, lns. 9-11. Agrawal does not describe that the user is able to “assemble a set of the discrete executable directives into an executable sequence” as recited by claim 1. Specifically, as understood by Applicants, Agrawal does not mention that the user interface allows the user to “assemble a set of the discrete executable directives into an executable sequence, wherein the executable sequence comprises: at least one discrete executable directive defining a query against the collection of data, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable analysis directive, followed at some time by at least one discrete executable distribution directive.” Therefore, Agrawal does not teach or suggest the “accepting user input” element of claim 1.

In addition, Applicants cannot find anywhere within Agrawal or Horowitz a teaching or suggestion to modify the cited prior art references so as to result in the elements of claim 1 discussed above.

Because the cited references, individually or in combination, fail to describe at least one claim limitation of claim 1, Applicants believe that claim 1 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn. Thus, claim 1 should be allowable over the cited art.

Claims 2-20

Claims 2-20 depend on claim 1. Thus, at least for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 1, claims 2-20 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 27

Amended claim 27 reads as follows:

A method of selectively distributing information from a data warehouse, the method comprising:

accepting a set of queries to be periodically run against the data warehouse, wherein the queries generate result sets;

accepting a set of filters to selectively identify result sets of interest out of the result sets generated from the queries;

accepting a set of distribution instructions indicating how the result sets of interest are to be distributed.

Agrawal's description of using "data mining and OLAP technologies" to discover the real world relations between unrelated activities (Agrawal, col. 10, lns. 49-53) does not teach or suggest "selectively distributing information from a data warehouse" as recited by claim 27. Because Agrawal and Horowitz, individually or in combination, fail to describe at least one claim limitation of claim 27, Applicants believe that claim 27 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 28-32

Claims 28-32 ultimately depend on claim 27. Thus, at least for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 27, claims 28-32 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 33

Claim 33 has been amended to clarify that the executable sequence "comprises at least one query followed by at least one analysis directive followed by at least one distribution directive." Amended claim 33 reads as follows (emphasis added):

A computer-based system for presenting a user interface for construction of an executable sequence to automate a decision-making process based on a collection of data, the system comprising:

a user interface element for accepting user input to configure a plurality of discrete executable directives encapsulating logic associated with the decision-making process, wherein at least one of the discrete executable directives defines a query against the collection of data, at least one of the discrete executable directives defines an analysis directive to analyze information derived from the query, and at least one of the discrete executable directives defines a distribution directive to distribute information based on the analysis; and

a user interface element for associating the plurality of discrete executable directives into an executable sequence, wherein the executable sequence comprises at least one query followed by at least one analysis directive followed by at least one distribution directive.

For at least reasons similar to those set forth above with reference to claim 1, the Agrawal and Horowitz references, individually or in combination, fail to describe at least one claim limitation of claim 33. Therefore, applicants believe that claim 33 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 34-35

Claims 34-35 ultimately depend on claim 33. Thus, at least for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 33, claims 34-35 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 36

Claim 36 reads as follows:

A computer user interface for entering a combined unit of querying, filtering, and distribution, the user interface comprising:

means for entering a series of steps, wherein at least one of the steps is a query, at least one of the steps is a filter for filtering results generated based on the query, and at least one of the steps is a distribution directive indicating how the filtered results are to be distributed; and

means for scheduling the steps for automatic periodic execution.

Agrawal and Horiwitz, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest a “means for entering a series of steps, wherein at least one of the steps is a query, at least one of the steps is a filter for filtering results generated based on the query, and at least one of the steps is a distribution directive indicating how the filtered results are to be distributed” as recited by claim 36. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 36 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 38

Claim 38 reads as follows:

A computer user interface for designating an executable sequence for providing an analysis of a collection of data, the computer user interface comprising:

a presentation of a list of queries, from which a user can select one or more queries to be added to the sequence;

a presentation of a list of analysis directives, from which a user can select one or more analysis directives to be added to the sequence to be performed on the results of the selected queries to generate analysis results; and

a presentation of a list of distribution directives, from which a user can select one or more distribution directives to be added to the sequence and specifying how the analysis results are to be distributed.

Agrawal and Horiwitz, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest a “user interface for designating an executable sequence for providing an analysis of a collection of data” where the user interface presents a list of queries, a list of analysis directives, and a list of distribution directives, as recited by claim 38. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 38 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 39

Claims 39 depends on claim 38. Thus, at least for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 38, claim 39 should be in condition for allowance.

Patentability of Claims 21-26, 37 and 40 under § 103(a)

The Action rejected claims 21-26, 37 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Agrawal in view of Medl. Applicants respectfully submit the claims in their present form are allowable over the cited art.

Claim 21

Claim 21 has been amended to clarify that the executable sequence “comprises at least one query directive, at least one analysis directive, and at least one distribution directive.”

Amended claim 21 reads as follows (emphasis added).

A computer-implemented method of presenting a user interface for creating executable sequences from processing directives, the method comprising:

presenting a first display area comprising graphical representations of available processing directives, wherein the processing directives comprise query

directives, analysis directives, and distribution directives;
presenting a second display area comprising graphical representations of processing directives selected as included in the executable sequence;
depicting coupled processing directives as graphically linked and conditionally coupled processing directives as graphically linked with a depiction of a condition associated with the link;
accepting a drag and drop operation to drop a processing directive from the first display area into the second display area; and
responsive to the drag and drop operation, adding the processing directive to the executable sequence, wherein the executable sequence comprises at least one query directive, at least one analysis directive, and at least one distribution directive.

Agrawal and Medl, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest “a user interface for creating executable sequences from processing directives” where “the executable sequence comprise at least one query directive, at least one analysis directive, and at least one distribution directive,” as recited by claim 21. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 21 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 22

Claim 22 reads as follows:

A computer-implemented method of defining query-based processing to be performed for a collection of data, the method comprising:

selecting a plurality of processing directives, wherein the processing directives are operable to generate, process, and distribute information from the collection of data, at least one of the processing directives is a query, and at least one of the processing directives is a template;

associating the processing directives and the parameters into an executable sequence; and

specifying parameters for binding to the template to be used when the processing directives are executed.

Agrawal and Medl, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest “selecting a plurality of processing directives, wherein the processing directives are operable to generate, process, and distribute information from the collection of data, at least one of the processing directives is a query, and at least one of the processing directives is a template” as recited by claim 22. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 22 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 23-26

Claims 23-26 depend on claim 22. Thus, at least for the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 22, claims 23-26 should be in condition for allowance.

Claim 37

Claim 37 reads as follows:

A computer user interface for defining query-based processing to be performed on a collection of data, the system comprising:

a presentation of available processing directives for generating information from the collection of data, wherein at least one of the processing directives is a query, at least one of the processing directives is a template, and a plurality of processing directives can be selected;

a presentation for accepting one or more parameters to be bound to the template; and

a presentation for naming the processing directives and the parameters as an executable sequence.

Agrawal and Medl, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest a “user interface for defining query-based processing to be performed on a collection of data” where “at least one of the processing directives is a query, at least one of the processing directives is a template, and a plurality of processing directives can be selected” as recited by claim 37. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 37 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 40

Claim 40 reads as follows:

A computer-readable medium for storing an executable sequence for execution by a computer system to perform query-based processing on a collection of data, the sequence comprising:

information indicating a plurality of processing directives for generating information from the collection of data, wherein at least one of the processing directives is a query, at least one of the processing directives is a template, and a plurality of processing directives can be selected; and

information indicating one or more parameters to be bound to the template.

Agrawal and Medl, individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest performing “query-based processing on a collection of data” where “at least one of the processing directives is a query, at least one of the processing directives is a template, and a plurality of processing

directives can be selected” as recited by claim 40. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 40 is not subject to a § 103(a) rejection and request that the rejection be withdrawn.

New Claim 41

Claim 41, which is dependent on claim 1, is directed to an executable sequence where “at least one discrete executable directive defining a query against the collection of data is followed immediately in the executable sequence by the at least one discrete executable analysis directive” which is then “followed immediately in the executable sequence by the at least one discrete executable distribution directive.” As understood by Applicants, an Agrawal-Horowitz combination does not teach or suggest such an arrangement.

Request for Interview

If any issues remain, the Examiner is formally requested to contact the undersigned attorney prior to issuance of the next Office Action in order to arrange a telephonic interview. It is believed that a brief discussion of the merits of the present application may expedite prosecution. Applicants submit the foregoing formal Amendment so that the Examiner may fully evaluate Applicants’ position, thereby enabling the interview to be more focused.

This request is being submitted under MPEP § 713.01, which indicates that an interview may be arranged in advance by a written request.

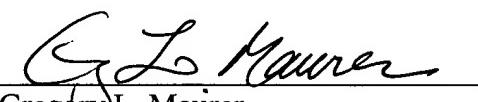
Conclusion

The claims in their present form should now be allowable. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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